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COMMENTS ON THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S SURVEY
OF THE CIA CAREER SERVICE

GENERAL

The Inspector General's basic premise is that CIA must move forward in building its Career Service and that the career development of intelligence officers is a central problem in this field. With this there can be no dispute.

The Career Service plans devised during the early 1950's and implemented during the remainder of that decade have been reasonably well tested. There will be broad agreement as to what to retain and what to discard. A number of basic, technical improvements have been and are being made in the personnel practices which support Career Service administration: the Flexible T/O, Separation Procedures, Average Grade Controls and Manpower Controls. There has been steady improvement in the general level of personnel management by the various Career Services. There is one final and extremely important job to be done: the identification and separation of surplus personnel. As soon as this has been completed we should be prepared to introduce a more positive Career Service Program.

One lesson that we have learned over the past few years is that in personnel administration, and particularly in the field of career development,

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true progress comes slowly and is the result of a lot of careful and thoughtful work. Various companies and even certain departments in Government use career development as a central theme in advertising for recruits. The impression is sometimes given that the road to success and satisfaction is a broad avenue that you can speed down, guided along the way by an alert personnel office. It is our hope that CIA will avoid that sort of appeal and that in evaluating our own progress we will not be deluded by such claims on the part of others.

A discussion of the Inspector General's recommendations concerning the structure and purpose of our future Career Service Program depends on some measure of agreement concerning the Agency's needs in this regard. The survey drawn up by the Inspector ranges over this broad subject and provides the reader with many insights and many opinions but it fails to present a reasonably balanced and accurate description of those problem areas that need reform. This is a result of the fact that the Inspector has dealt with the problem almost entirely at Agency level. Perhaps then a systematic survey of the subject can suggest a more reliable answer to the key question that faces the Agency at this time, namely, how far should we go in attempting reform of Career Service at this time? Such a survey in brief form is given under the separate headings that follow.

A. PRODUCING LEADERSHIP

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First, with regard to filling senior positions the Agency is in a favored position. From the very beginning it has been free to move persons at senior and higher middle-grade levels from position to position, free from the restrictions imposed on other Federal departments and agencies by law and tradition. The group of men who have been selected into Agency supergrades represent, in the aggregate, a wide breadth of experience and very high individual caliber. It is notable that there are very few among them that could not easily be replaced from within the group or from the GS-15's now on hand. To say all this is not to suggest that career development work is not necessary in preparing men and women for senior positions or that the situation we find ourselves in is ideal. For example, a survey undertaken by the Deputy Director (Intelligence) shows that a number of his GS-16's and 17's have had remarkably narrow experience and it is questionable whether the men and women behind them on the ladder of ascent will have broader experience if our career development program is not strengthened. In the Clandestine Services, on the other hand, the problem that we face today to some degree and may expect in increased measure in the future is just the opposite: an embarrassment of riches. The attractiveness of the Service, the high caliber of many employees at all professional levels, the opportunities for broad experience, and the early introduction of the individual to important responsibilities result in precocious growth. The DDP will be able to supply more generalist material than the Agency can use.

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The Deputy Director (Support) is pressing forward a survey of his sources of supply for senior talent. It is my impression that rotation of DDS personnel to positions overseas and among the headquarters elements and the continuation of an aggressive internal and external training program will supply most of the talent needed. Some lateral entry and some use of military personnel will handle the rest.

Our general conclusion regarding the need for an increased effort in the field of career development having to do with the provision of leadership is that some improvement is required in this area but that the Agency is by no means in bad shape.

B. CREATING UNITY

The inspector sees the rotation of middle and higher grade intelligence officers as a way of solving the problem of separateness in CIA. There can be no doubt but that individuals who have had successful tours of duty first in one office and then in another are able to work out systems of collaboration between these two offices and can thereby contribute to organizational teamwork.

Given the size of the intelligence effort in the United States, the complex relationship that exists between the Clandestine Services and the

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various producers of intelligence, the operation of the need-to-know principle, the formal procedures that must necessarily be followed in the conduct of day-to-day business, and the undercurrent of competitiveness that influences the relationship between the Clandestine Services and all of its customers, including those in CIA, it can be seen that the problem of creating unity is a very broad one and one to which personnel operations can only make a limited contribution.

By painting this dark picture I do not wish to imply that there has been no progress. But there remains a long, long way to go. The relaxed, sophisticated, and informal channels of communication that do exist here and there between collector and producer and between other participants in cooperative efforts are the model. It is notable that they are more the product of mutual respect and intelligent understanding than of any system of rotation. Indeed they form a background for the successful development of personnel rotation plans.

It is our conclusion, therefore, that the goal of unity, of efficient communication and of good teamwork is a proper goal for management. The Agency's career development program can and should be used in working toward this goal but it would be a grave mistake to try to move forward on

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this front alone or to try to move too fast.

C. THE DDI ANALYST

Far more serious is the need for sound career development doctrine in the administration of certain specialized categories of intelligence analysts and technicians. Not only are we faced with a most difficult problem in this area but the solutions thus far proposed are not adequate.

"Things have gone just fine so far. I have been treated well. I like intelligence and find the materials that I work with especially interesting. I think I am paid well enough. But I worry about the future. I worry about going stale. Some of the men I work with are already....." How often these words are spoken nowadays. One never heard them in OSS. One rarely heard them in ORE. The war, the cold war, expansion, increasing requirements, rapid promotion and the distractions and excitement attendant on continuous reorganization made "going stale" a remote danger. Today both organizationally and individually fear of going stale lies just below the surface in the DDI. Organizationally the DDI has settled down. Rapid growth adjustment and reorganization are over. To the typical individual the challenge of a new job in a new field is over. The advance to a respectable professional level has been successfully completed. It is known that

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promotions will come slowly. Professionally the need is great for relief from a total preoccupation with paper, reading and writing reports, preparing briefings, providing "background" materials.

Our general conclusion regarding the DDI analyst is that he represents one of the Agency's most serious problems in the field of personnel management. A development effort aimed at introducing a carefully measured element of variety and challenge into the analyst's career is needed.

D. ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALISM

The Inspector alludes to the problem of academic professionalism, which of course centers in the DDI although there are instances of it elsewhere. One of the characteristics of the professional is that he may feel torn between his loyalty to his profession and his more recently acquired interest in intelligence. He may in fact feel that his true interests lie in the direction of advancement in his profession rather than in intelligence. He is apt from time to time to be lured by employment in industry, in teaching positions, or in academic research. At the very minimum he has a sense of separate status and not infrequently looks down a bit at the mere intelligence officer. Bona fide physical scientists and economists are given to feelings of superiority nowadays. This situation is not uncommon in government and industry. It represents one of the minor challenges to management.

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It would be our feeling that the type of program that we would develop for the purpose of keeping the experienced analyst from going stale could also be used to increase the knowledge of and appreciation for intelligence operations on the part of the professional.

E. THE CLANDESTINE SERVICES

The Clandestine Services have at their disposal a variety of assignments at all professional levels. This makes it possible to conduct career development operations among the most talented with great ease and effectiveness. The result is that the area divisions and staffs produce annually a formidable group of new GS-13, 14 and 15 operations officers some of whom have the capacity to become generalists. In an article published two years ago by Studies in Intelligence I reviewed the process of growth that takes a man from specialization to generalism. There is an obvious need that this growth be stimulated and supported, that assignments of individuals outside of the Clandestine Services be arranged, and that full advantage be taken of the opportunities for advanced study. These refinements can readily be added to the present system.

The real challenge to Career Service is to be found among that group of specialists who are not intrinsically outstanding but upon whose ability to perform at a very high level of competence depends the efficient

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operation of the Service. It is the group that with every passing year becomes less mobile and less adaptable. Frequently members of this group are passed over in making assignments because, although each one earned his present grade by honest and often very productive work, times have changed and needs have changed.

That there should be such a group is inevitable. There are professional casualties in every walk of life. It is to be expected that in a field as demanding of high levels of performance and behavior as the field of clandestine operations there will be a fairly high casualty rate. However, it will not be possible to develop a long-range, attractive and effective career service program for the Clandestine Services if the casualty rate is allowed to remain at its present level. Therefore, in addition to the steps that are planned to identify and release those officers whose usefulness is at an end, there must be a program designed to prevent Clandestine Services officers from slipping once they have lost the momentum that carries a man through his original training, his apprenticeship assignments and to a respectable level as an area operations officer. Return from overseas to an overcrowded branch, assignment to a staff or to a special project can be the occasion for the beginning of the downward slope. Loss of a sponsor and dependence on the Clandestine Services employment market can have its real

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dangers. To understand the nature of these risks, a word must be said about the structure and the business habits of the Clandestine Services.

F. STRUCTURE OF CLANDESTINE SERVICES PERSONNEL OPERATION

Over the years the Clandestine Services have developed their own unique ways of doing business. The distribution of authority between headquarters and field, between branch and division, and between division and organization is flexible and can be adjusted to favor the man exercising operational responsibility in any given instance. The authority to accept or reject personnel rests with the operating units at these various levels and the authority to promote is reserved to the Career Service. The DDP, as Head of the Career Service, can invade the former area by directing the assignment of an individual, but this is rarely done. The result of this division of authority is that each unit up and down the various echelons of command acts for all intents and purposes as an independent concern doing its own hiring and firing. The Career Service Secretariat plays the part of the U. S. Employment Service. Indeed, the motivation of placement officers centers around their ability to help people in what often appears to be an unequal contest with management. Thousands of hours of working time are spent by the Career Service people who must shop individuals and by administrative

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personnel who must carefully scrutinize files in order to protect their organizations from the assignment of misfits.

Three things make this effort on the part of the Career Service mechanism frustrating and wasteful. First, a series of informal networks made up of responsible professional officers play extensively at the game of trading people. This is done at lunch, by telephone call, as an after-thought in the conduct of other business. The number of candidates considered for an opening depends on the judgment and tactics of the man controlling the position. As a result, a very large percentage of good positions are never notified to the Career Service. Second, there are a good number of officers who at any one time should be placed or moved. The Career Service Secretariat naturally tries to make such placements into the positions that are known to be open with the result that the Career Service has earned the reputation of being a placement problem-solver and not a reliable supplier. Then, finally, it is almost impossible for the personnel placement officers to be sensitive to the different priorities that must dictate the movement of people from one unit to another in a well-ordered operation. In small organizations, command can do this; hence, the success of certain operating units and smaller career services. In theory command is represented in the Clandestine Services Career Service by the panels and panel chairmen. In practice this is so only to a limited degree. The most conspicuous result is that the Career Service so often fails to pursue

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aggressively the only course that will satisfy an important requirement, namely, to go after candidates on the basis of their qualifications rather than their availability. Further, the Career Service cannot determine with confidence that a particular position can be adequately filled by their candidate, that is, by an individual who needs the experience. This renders most difficult the orderly career development of individuals and the prevention of the high casualty rate referred to above.

Our general conclusion with regard to the Clandestine Services is that an expanded career development program is necessary in order to effect proper balance between the logically self-centered objectives of operating units and overriding operational and career development requirements of the Clandestine Services.

G. THE DDS

The several services that comprise the DDS have developed satisfactory internal career service practices and the key career development problem in this area is the classical one of executive leadership. As pointed out above, steps are being taken to solve this problem. In saying this one must be careful to emphasize that this problem is inherently a most difficult one. The diversity of function, the dependence that must be placed on specialists at the working level, and the difference in the type

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of work and extent of responsibility at the several higher echelons make it quite an art to groom a man for promotion into the senior grades. Fortunately for us, the problem that confronts the DDS is exactly the problem that confronts business and wide areas of government. CIA does not need to extemporize in this area. Sound practice is being developed to meet the problem and excellent management training is being offered in various schools.

H. THE EFFECTS OF HIRING AND ASSIGNMENT PRACTICES ON CAREER SERVICE AND THE AGENCY'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The appeal of this Agency to many young men just graduating from college is the appeal of an assignment in covert operations. This of course is a real asset in JOT recruiting. It does not even need to be mentioned. Bright young men understand that there are things that cannot be spelled out. Unhappily the somewhat less talented college graduate whom we hire for OCR, for Registry, and for other sub-professional jobs is frequently moved by the same appeal. This establishes a basic misunderstanding which has dogged the Agency's Career Service system since its inception and which explains a great deal of the dissatisfaction evidenced by such employees. It is quite possible that if such a recruit knew what his real chances were for a satisfactory operational career he would turn elsewhere. But this he

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cannot know. The recruiter is free to tell him about his initial assignment but certainly cannot speculate about chances thereafter. The employing unit attempts to hold the interest of the employee in the work being done, leaving to "Career Service" the problem of satisfying the employee's long-range interests.

The effect of these practices is to charge against the Career Service account all of the unfulfilled hopes of the men who do not reach the area divisions and to defer until a later date the troubles of those who do but who are not basically equipped to succeed in covert work. There are a few who make the grade; many do not and these are among the group that the DDP hopes to separate involuntarily.

It is not suggested that the solution to the problem is an easy one. It is an old and respected practice for ambitious young men to accept clerical or menial work in order to enter the field or company of their choice. Line supervisors can hardly be blamed for accepting them. They are excellent producers during their first few years. The real trouble comes later. The almost-professional standing of positions open to such people in our big mail and file operations, the use of junior professional grades (9 and 11) for such positions combined with the fact that it is possible to learn the language of intelligence, indeed of operations, without being

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exposed to the substance of the matter result in the Agency's being supplied annually with quite a number of ill-equipped medium-graded officers.

Our general conclusion with regard to this group is that sound personnel management (definition of long range sub-professional personnel requirements, selective recruitment, counseling of the employees) and not career development is the required cure. In the past, the college graduate file clerk has been the joker in the career service pack and his plight has been held up as a reproach to Agency management.

I. DISCUSSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Inspector's recommendations center around two basic proposals: first, that a committee of four officials deriving authority and support from the Director of Central Intelligence and the operating deputies be assigned the task of developing and implementing a career development program, and second, that the Career Service structure of the Agency be rearranged more along occupational lines and that there be but one Career Service for career intelligence officers (as contrasted with technicians and with professionals whose main interest is in their professions not in intelligence). The first proposal is sound and with some modifications should be adopted. The second proposal is unsound.

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1. The Career Development Board

a. Structure

The Board should be composed of the Director of Personnel as chairman and three senior officers appointed by the Deputies to serve as career development officers, in addition to their other duties. The Board would deal with matters of policy and with individual cases pertaining to senior personnel. In addition, each Deputy would be asked to appoint a full-time, working level career development officer. The Director of Personnel or his designee would regularly convene these officers for the purpose of handling career development matters pertaining to medium grade personnel.

b. Authority

The control of personnel is of such critical importance to an officer charged with operational responsibilities that the authority to overrule that officer in essential personnel matters can only reside at the next higher level of command. This may not be true in other agencies or departments and it may not be true in certain business concerns. In this Agency, however, where so much depends on the qualifications of the individual to do a job it is a central feature of management.

At the Deputies' level the career development officer will derive his authority from the Deputy. If his decisions are contested by the

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office, staff or division chief they must go to the Deputy for resolution. Similarly, the D/Pers in career development matters must be free to refer cases to the DCI for decision.

It must be emphasized that our need is not for an increase in authority but an increase in its effective use. Failure in the past has not been a reluctance on the part of higher command authority to make decisions but a failure to put the cases requiring decision forward. The recommendations having to do with the functions of the career development officers are therefore the key to our problem.

c. Functions

The career development officers acting individually will be expected to develop and implement career development programs for each of the three general areas of the Agency and acting together under the chairmanship of the D/Pers they will be expected to develop Agency policy and make such assignments from one area to another as may be needed.

By far their immediate and most demanding function is the former, for upon this the latter absolutely depends. The Agency system of career development can only be built on successful and operating career development programs within the several career services.

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The career development officers will have to spend a large part of their time conducting evaluative reviews of personnel files and interviewing people. They will establish and keep current listings of personnel who show promise, making full use of the facilities and acquired knowledge of the Career Service placement officers. They will be free to attend board and panel meetings. They will consult with operating officials concerning the characteristics of job openings in their areas of responsibility. They will monitor the assignments of professional personnel and will arrange for such changes in proposed assignments as may be called for to carry forward the career development program.

The DDI career development officer should be responsible for the development of programs to be financed by and conducted by the DDI and designed to provide the stimulation and variety of experience needed by analysts in that area. A careful exploration should be made of the possibility of arranging rotational assignments to departments and agencies with overseas responsibilities. Foreign study and travel should be encouraged. Contact with U. S. experts in the fields of competence represented in the DDI including rotational tours at academic institutions should be encouraged. A careful record of the extent of such undertakings and appropriate publicity within the DDI will be helpful.

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The DDI and DDP officers assisted and guided by the D/Pers will arrange for a schedule of exchange rotational tours. These schedules will be reviewed and approved semi-annually by DDP and DDI and the persons listed will be moved during the subsequent six months. The Board will review the files of former JOT's and of other promising persons annually between the fifth and fifteenth anniversary of their entrance on duty and the D/Pers shall report its findings and recommendations pertaining to this group to the Career Council.

The DDP career development officer will have as his especial responsibility the development of procedures and methods which will result in the purposeful and successful career development of the main body of operations officers. He should center most of this activity in the operating divisions because they must of necessity be responsible for the maintenance, development, and expansion of language and area knowledge and of operational skills adapted to the requirements of given areas. With the help of the Office of Personnel, he will need to develop sound records pertaining to the qualifications of personnel and to forecast future needs. Using these figures, he will be in a position to justify and require the systematic advanced training of personnel and to open up opportunities to those officers who require new avenues for growth and development.

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The DDS officer's special responsibilities will center around executive training. We have already developed this point.

2. The Career Service

The development of a single service for intelligence officers as proposed by the IG would remove from the control of the DDI and DDP the hard core of their staffs. In effect it would place the control of these officers at the DCI level because the Deputies could not effectively adjudicate cases. At this level control would be too remote and too separate from operational requirements to be effective.

A more serious difficulty arises from the nature of the single service. It would be the service to which "true careerists" would be assigned. Thus, selection for this service would involve an assessment of motivation, and here we are on thin ice. There have been in this Agency a number of informal, self-appointed groups that have regarded themselves as highly motivated and have looked with suspicion upon the motivation of others. In a more formal sense, an effort was made in setting up the original Career Staff to distinguish between the motivated and the unmotivated and this effort, which found its expression in an endless number of hours of futile debate on the part of the Selection Panels, has perhaps revealed in their purest form the basic immaturities that center around this type of evaluation. Materials

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brought forward to the Selection Board have not infrequently had the ring of fraternity debates about the qualifications of pledges.

All this is not to say that there is not a very great difference between the motivated intelligence officer on the one hand and the professional who is merely selling his professional services to the Agency on the other or between the motivated intelligence officer and the man who is more interested in emoluments and benefits than he is in getting the job done. These distinctions confront us every day but they cannot be institutionalized.

3. Occupational Services

The Inspector's proposal in this regard would again remove Career Service a step further away from the hierarchy of command and would deprive career management of the convenience that that decision-making mechanism now represents.

Furthermore, some of the occupational services would be unwieldy in the extreme. From the employee's point of view the restrictive boundaries of the service instead of running vertically would run horizontally. Many occupations have but a narrow range of grades and people locked into them might well feel that the Agency had gone out of its way to develop or extend its "class" structure.

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Finally, it is a point of pride to many people not only to be assigned to an office but to belong to its "Career Service." They see in the Service, however remote, an avenue of advance. Clerical and other junior employees learn the work of the Service and that knowledge is often of more importance to them than knowledge of their basic skill.

4. Proposed Structural and Procedural Changes

a. The CIA Career Council

The Career Council has proved to be an effective instrument for developing Agency personnel policy. The formulation of personnel policies often involves the broadest possible coordination since the policies must be acceptable in all the situations in which they may be used to define and control the Agency's relationships with its personnel. The Council procedures have given us a systematic means for assessing proposals against the criteria, values, and requirements of the main area of CIA. These are not matters to be referred for resolution to specialists, no matter how talented. It is proposed that the Council be redesignated the Agency Personnel Board in recognition of the full scope of the policy proposals with which this body deals.

b. Supergrade Board and the CIA Selection Board

It is proposed that both of these Boards be retained. However, procedures for entrance into the Career Staff should be greatly

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simplified along the lines proposed by the Inspector General.

c. Career Preference Outline

The Career Preference Outline should be discontinued and career development counseling done on an individual basis by the newly appointed career development officers proposed above.

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